

**Amendments to the Claims:**

1 1. (currently amended) A method of collecting network management information from a  
 2 plurality of network devices in a network management system, the method comprising  
 3 the computer-implemented steps of:  
 4 configuring said network management system to acquire data from specific network  
 5 devices from said plurality of network devices based on a user-definable  
 6 operational specification;  
 7 querying said specific network devices for data to form a set of acquired data ~~in~~  
 8 ~~accordance with~~ based on said operational specification;  
 9 transforming said acquired data to form a set of transformed data ~~in accordance with~~  
 10 based on one or more formulas specified in said operational specification; and  
 11 storing said transformed data to an information base to form a set of stored data ~~in~~  
 12 ~~accordance with~~ based on said operational specification.

1 2. (original) A method as recited in Claim 1, wherein said operational specification is  
 2 defined in an Extensible Markup Language file.

1 3. (currently amended) A method as recited in Claim 1, wherein said operational  
 2 specification includes a scheduling block to direct said network management system  
 3 to ~~operate~~ perform said querying step at a preset point in time.

1 4. (currently amended) A method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the step of querying said  
 2 specific network devices includes using a network communication protocol that is  
 3 defined in said operational specification for each of said specific network devices.

1 5. (original) A method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the step of transforming said  
2 acquired data includes performing at least one arithmetic transformation on said  
3 acquired data, wherein said arithmetic transformation is specified by said operational  
4 specification.

1 6. (currently amended) A method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising the step of  
2 monitoring said acquired data, said transformed data and said stored data for  
3 compliance with at least one threshold criterion value specified by said operational  
4 specification.

1 7. (original) A method as recited in Claim 6, further comprising the step of generating a  
2 notification when any of said acquired data, said transformed data and said stored data  
3 complies with said threshold criterion.

1 8. (original) A method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising the step of aggregating  
2 said stored data to form a set of trending data by performing at least one arithmetic  
3 aggregation on said stored data, wherein said arithmetic aggregation is specified by  
4 said operational specification.

1 9. (original) A method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising the step of removing a  
2 quantity of said stored data from said information base in accordance with information  
3 in said operational specification.

1 10. (currently amended) A method of collecting and aggregating network management  
2 information from a plurality of network devices in a network management system, the  
3 method comprising the computer-implemented steps of:  
4 configuring said network management system to acquire data from specific network  
5 devices from said plurality of network devices based on a user-definable  
6 operational specification;  
7 querying said network devices for data to form a set of acquired data ~~in accordance~~  
8 ~~with~~ based on said operational specification;  
9 transforming said acquired data to form a set of transformed data ~~in accordance with~~  
10 based on said operational specification;  
11 storing said transformed data to an information base to form a set of stored data ~~in~~  
12 ~~accordance with~~ based on said operational specification; and  
13 aggregating said stored data to form a set of trending data by performing at least one  
14 arithmetic aggregation on said stored data, wherein said arithmetic aggregation  
15 is specified by said operational specification.

1 11. (original) A method as recited in Claim 10, wherein said operational specification is  
2 defined in an Extensible Markup Language file.

1 12. (currently amended) A method as recited in Claim 10, wherein said operational  
2 specification includes a scheduling block to direct said network management system  
3 to ~~operate~~ perform said querying step at a preset point in time.

1 13. (currently amended) A method as recited in Claim 10, wherein the step of querying  
2 said specific network devices includes using a network communication protocol that  
3 is defined in said operational specification for each of said specific network devices.

1 14. (original) A method as recited in Claim 10, wherein the step of transforming said  
2 acquired data includes performing at least one arithmetic transformation on said  
3 acquired data, wherein said arithmetic transformation is specified by said operational  
4 specification.

1 15. (currently amended) A method as recited in Claim 10, further comprising the step of  
2 monitoring said acquired data, said transformed data and said stored data for  
3 compliance with at least one threshold criterion value specified by said operational  
4 specification.

1 16. (original) A method as recited in Claim 15, further comprising the step of generating a  
2 notification when any of said acquired data, said transformed data and said stored data  
3 complies with said threshold criterion.

1 17. (original) A method as recited in Claim 10, further comprising the step of removing a  
2 quantity of said stored data from said information base in accordance with information  
3 in said operational specification.

1 18. (currently amended) A method of collecting, aggregating and monitoring network  
2 management information from a plurality of network devices in a network  
3 management system, the method comprising the computer-implemented steps of:

4 configuring said network management system to acquire data from specific network  
5 devices from said plurality of network devices based on a user-definable  
6 operational specification, wherein said operational specification is an  
7 Extensible Markup Language file and includes a scheduling block to direct  
8 said network management system to operate at a preset point in time;  
9 querying said specific network devices for data to form a set of acquired data ~~in~~  
10 ~~accordance with~~ based on said operational specification, using a network  
11 communication protocol that is defined in said operational specification for  
12 each of said specific network devices;  
13 transforming said acquired data to form a set of transformed data, including  
14 performing at least one arithmetic transformation on said acquired data,  
15 wherein said arithmetic transformation is specified by said operational  
16 specification;  
17 storing said transformed data to an information base to form a set of stored data ~~in~~  
18 ~~accordance with~~ based on said operational specification;  
19 monitoring said acquired data, said transformed data and said stored data for  
20 compliance with at least one threshold criterion value specified by said  
21 operational specification;  
22 generating a notification when any of said acquired data, said transformed data and  
23 said stored data complies with said threshold criterion value;  
24 aggregating said stored data to form a set of trending data by performing at least one  
25 arithmetic aggregation on said stored data, wherein said arithmetic aggregation  
26 is specified by said operational specification; and

removing a quantity of said stored data from said information base ~~in accordance with~~  
based on information in said operational specification.

19. (currently amended) A computer-readable medium carrying one or more sequences of  
instructions for collecting network management information from a plurality of  
network devices in a network management system, which instructions, when executed  
by one or more processors, cause the one or more processors to carry out the steps of:  
configuring said network management system to acquire data from specific network  
devices from a plurality of network devices on a network based on a user-  
definable operational specification;  
querying said network devices for data to form a set of acquired data ~~in accordance~~  
~~with~~ based on said operational specification;  
transforming said acquired data to form a set of transformed data ~~in accordance with~~  
based on formulas specified in said operational specification; and  
storing said transformed data to an information base to form a set of stored data ~~in~~  
~~accordance with~~ based on said operational specification.

20. (currently amended) An apparatus for collecting network management information  
from a plurality of network devices in a network management system, comprising:  
means for configuring said network management system to acquire data from specific  
network devices from said plurality of network devices based on a user-  
definable operational specification;  
means for querying said network devices for data to form a set of acquired data ~~in~~  
~~accordance with~~ based on said operational specification;

8 means for transforming said acquired data to form a set of transformed data ~~in~~  
 9 ~~accordance with~~ based on formulas specified in said operational specification;  
 10 and  
 11 means for storing said transformed data to an information base to form a set of stored  
 12 data ~~in accordance with~~ based on said operational specification.

- 1 21. (currently amended) An apparatus for collecting and aggregating network management  
 2 information in a network management system, comprising:  
 3 one or more configuration files for configuring said network management system to  
 4 acquire data from a specific plurality of network devices on a network based on a  
 5 user-definable operational specification;  
 6 one or more query modules for querying said network devices for data to form a set of  
 7 acquired data ~~in accordance with~~ based on said operational specification;  
 8 one or more transformation modules for transforming said acquired data to form a set of  
 9 transformed data ~~in accordance with~~ based on said operational specification;  
 10 one or more storage modules for storing said transformed data to an information base to  
 11 form a set of stored data ~~in accordance with~~ based on said operational  
 12 specification; and  
 13 one or more aggregation modules for aggregating said stored data to form a set of  
 14 trending data by performing at least one arithmetic operation on said stored data,  
 15 said arithmetic operation specified by said operational specification.